



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge

Planning Update #3

July 2002



“A river seems a magic thing. A magic, moving, living part of the very earth itself....”

-Laura Gilpin, *The Rio Grande*, 1949



Wood Duck

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National Wildlife Refuge System Mission:

“The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.”



Greetings!

This is the third planning update since starting the Refuge’s comprehensive conservation planning process last June. The Refuge staff and the planning office have been steadily working through the planning process using your comments and working with other river partners to develop management goals and strategies. The habitat and visitor services alternatives are coming together. This update describes new happenings on the Refuge and the progress of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP).

New Assistant Refuge Manager

In November 2001, Kelly Moroney was hired as the assistant Refuge Manager responsible for the management of the Sacramento River NWR. Kelly received bachelor's degrees from Chico State University and Humboldt State University and most recently worked on National Wildlife Refuges in Oregon and Washington. In addition to his day-to-day responsibilities for the Sacramento River NWR, Kelly will also oversee the Law Enforcement Program for the entire refuge complex. Kelly can be contacted at (530) 934-2801. Welcome aboard Kelly!

Outreach on the River

The Sacramento River NWR is just one entity working along the Sacramento River. The Refuge staff continue to work with various groups concerning the river. Most recently, Refuge staff have given presentations to the Chico Rotary Club, United Sportsmen for Wildlife and Habitat, and the Butte County Fish and Game Advisory Commission.

Sacramento River National Wildlife

Refuge Purposes:

“... to conserve (A) fish or wildlife which are listed as endangered species... or (B) plants ...” 16 U.S.C. 1534 (Endangered Species Act of 1973)

“... for the development, advancement, management, conservation, and protection of fish and wildlife resources ...” 16 U.S.C. 742f (a) (4)

“... for the benefit of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, in performing its activities and services. Such acceptance may be subject to the terms of any restrictive or affirmative covenant, or conditions of servitude ...” 16 U.S.C. 742f (b) (1) (Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956)

Proposed Refuge Vision Statement:

“Working with partners and local communities to conserve, protect, and enhance a healthy Sacramento River system for wildlife, habitat, and the American people.”



Other News on the River

Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for Proposed Restoration Activities on the Sacramento River NWR

The "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for Proposed Restoration Activities on the Sacramento River NWR" was completed and signed on February 10, 2002. The document evaluated the effects of restoring or enhancing natural vegetation on 2,372 Refuge owned acres. Refuge staff are committed to working with other agencies and local governments during restoration and enhancement activities. Interested parties can view this document at "<http://pacific.fws.gov/planning/>"

California Department of Fish and Game - Sacramento River Wildlife Area Management Plan

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) is developing a management plan for their lands along the river that are included within the Sacramento River Wildlife Area. CDFG has recently contracted with The Nature Conservancy to provide a full time planner to assist staff with developing their plan. CDFG and Sacramento River NWR staff are working closely to ensure that Federal and State management plans are consistent.

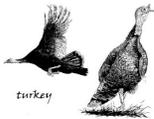
Where We Started and Why

In 1997, Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (Act). In addition to identifying a mission for the National Wildlife Refuge System, the Act directs that all wildlife refuges have a CCP in place by the year 2012. These CCPs will provide a 15-year guide, using the best available scientific knowledge, to help managers achieve the purposes for which each refuge was established, and to work toward the mission of the Refuge System. The Act lays out directives for managing refuges to ensure the long-term conservation of fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats. Two important principles of the Act are to maintain biological integrity and diversity of the area and facilitate compatible wildlife dependent recreation.

We started the CCP for the Refuge in early 2001 with preplanning and coordination. In May and June 2001 we held public scoping meetings at four locations to receive comments and discuss issues. Since then, the Refuge staff and the planning team have been working through the CCP process and meeting regularly.

Proposed Refuge Goals:

- Restore, enhance, and manage natural habitats, using principles of landscape ecology, to contribute to the recovery of endangered, threatened, and species of special concern, and to provide diversity and abundance of migratory birds, native plants, and other indigenous species.
- Provide wildlife-dependant recreation and educational opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to experience, appreciate, and understand the Refuge's riparian ecosystem, fish, wildlife, and history
- Work with other River stakeholders for the betterment of the Sacramento River ecosystem.



For More Information

We are available to provide additional information regarding the refuge and this planning process. Also, Fish and Wildlife Service staff can attend a meeting of your organization to discuss the Refuge Plan. Please notify us at least 3 weeks in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts.

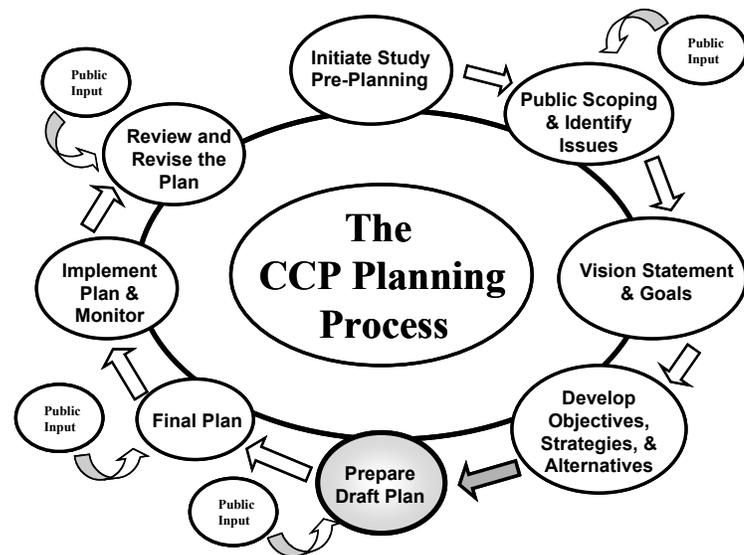
If you have questions, comments, concerns, or would like information about the Refuge, or would like to be removed from the Refuge mailing list, please feel free to call or write us:

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Complex
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What We've Been Doing

Since the last planning update in August 2001, the Refuge staff and planning team have been developing the Refuge goals, objectives, and strategies guided by the public scoping comments and the National Environmental Policy Act process. The planning team is currently refining alternatives for habitat management and visitor services that will be presented in the draft CCP and Environmental Assessment (EA) document.

The CCP planning process graphic below shows the steps in the planning process and where the Refuge is in the process:



What's Next

The planning team is currently completing the habitat management and visitor services alternatives. The team is also finishing the objectives and strategies, revising maps, and beginning the support appendices such as the hunting and fishing step down plans. The team hopes to publish a Notice of Availability for the draft CCP/EA in the Federal Register this fall or winter.

Please look over the proposed vision statement and goals, and if you like provide comments to us.

Check It Out

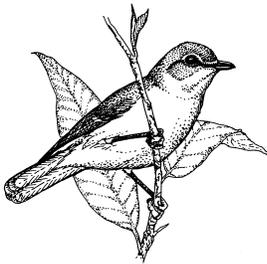
Please visit the following sites on the Web for more Refuge information and other planning documents:

<http://SacramentoValleyRefuges.fws.gov>

<http://pacific.fws.gov/planning/>

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Call, write, or email us to be placed on our mailing list, to report a change in your mailing address, or if you want to be removed from the mailing list.



Draft CCP / EA Document Mailing Request

We are requesting that people interested in receiving a draft copy of the CCP/EA fill out and send in the enclosed postcard. Copies of the document can be reviewed at your local library or reviewed at our web site (see above).



Sacramento River Bank Area

USFWS

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